



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

FEB 28 2002

OFFICE OF THE
ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Michael P. Jackson
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 10200
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Jackson:

Thank you for writing to request that EPA exercise enforcement discretion to allow the Maritime Administration to export 26 obsolete vessels for recycling. I share your view that the environmental risks posed by these seriously deteriorated vessels need to be addressed as expeditiously as possible.

At a recent meeting with Maritime Administrator William Schubert, I pledged EPA's cooperation in addressing this issue. Led by EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance, a team of representatives from all relevant EPA offices will begin to consider the broad issue of ship disposal, including ship dismantling and the use of obsolete ships as artificial reefs. EPA will consider exercising enforcement discretion on a case-by-case basis and will work with MARAD to establish the conditions under which the Agency would exercise this discretion to allow the export of a limited number of vessels to a facility in a foreign nation.

EPA remains committed to working with you to pursue the development of an appropriate ship-disposal program. Please have your staff contact Elliott Gilberg, Federal Facilities Enforcement Office, at (202) 564-7046, to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda J. Fisher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Linda J. Fisher
Deputy Administrator